

FARMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Policy Number:
241-19

Effective Date:
08/14/2018

Subject:
Limited English Proficiency

Approved by:

Steven D. Hebbe, Chief of Police



PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for employees to follow to ensure effective communication between agency personnel and the community they serve.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Farmington Police Department to effectively and accurately communicate with the community in which we serve. Language barriers can sometimes inhibit or even prohibit effective communication and can present the Department with safety, evidentiary, and ethical challenges.

PROCEDURE:

Definitions:

Primary Language- an individual's native tongue or the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.

Limited English Proficiency- individuals who have limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English as a primary language.

Interpretation- the act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.

Translation- the replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

Bilingual- the ability to use two languages proficiently.

Language Line- The Farmington Police Department has a contract with the language line service Voiance.

Personnel requesting Interpretation Services:

Personnel in need of interpretation services will attempt to identify the LEP individual's primary language. The primary method of translation should be the use of the language line Voiance. In order to use this service, the employee will call 1-866-998-0338. The system will ask for the account number (28389) followed by the PIN number (6435). The employee will be prompted to enter their badge number which will either be a 3 digit "R" number for sworn personnel or a 4 digit "civilian number" for civilian personnel. Voiance will ask for the language needed and a brief explanation of the call. The employee shall, if possible, make sure their telephone is on speaker phone so all parts of the conversation can be recorded. It is important the employee records all calls as possible either by body worn cameras, in-car camera systems, or any other alternative means of recording.

Temporary Interpreters

Circumstances may exist where personnel can use the most reliable, temporary interpreter available, such as bilingual personnel. Examples may include, but not be limited to: the need to obtain descriptive information on a suspect, identifying injuries, or in dealing with a combative subject. This method should only be used when the language line is unfeasible or unavailable.

The use of Family Friends and Bystanders as Interpreters:

Circumstances may exist where personnel can use family, friends or bystanders for interpreting in very informal, non-confrontational circumstances. Be aware that using family, friends, or bystanders to interpret could result in a breach of confidentiality, a conflict of interest, or an inadequate interpretation. Barring an exigent circumstance, personnel should not use minor children to provide interpreter services. This method should only be used when the language line is unfeasible or unavailable.